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Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of fifteen members of the Human Rights Council

Letter dated 22 July 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I wish to refer to Thailand's candidature to the Human Rights Council for the term 2015-2017 in the elections to be held in New York in 2014.

In this connection, I have the honour to submit herewith Thailand's voluntary pledges and commitments to the promotion and protection of human rights in accordance with paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 60/251 on the Human Rights Council (see annex). I would appreciate your arranging to circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Norachit **Sinhaseni**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/69/150.

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Annex to the letter dated 22 July 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Candidature of Thailand to the Human Rights Council, 2015-2017

Voluntary pledges and commitments pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/251

Thailand's contributions to human rights

Reaching out: an advocate for the promotion of equal participation and opportunity

1. Thailand attaches utmost importance to the promotion and protection of the rights of all people, especially vulnerable groups such as children, women, persons with disabilities and the elderly. We aim for a "society for all" where the human rights of all groups are respected and equally protected.

2. We are a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its three Optional Protocols; to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol; and to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. We are also in the process of becoming a party to its Optional Protocol. Efforts have been continuously undertaken to revise our domestic legislation, taking into account the principles enshrined in these international human rights instruments. The Child Protection Act of 2003, the Juvenile and Family Court and Juvenile and Family Procedure Act of 2010 and the Persons with Disabilities Empowerment Act of 2007 are examples of such legislation.

3. We are a member of the executive boards of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) for the term 2013-2015, and a member of the Commission on the Status of Women for the term 2012-2015. As a member of these bodies, we have worked to promote cooperation within the United Nations framework on the rights, development and empowerment of children and women, including advocating for zero tolerance concerning violence against them. As host country to the regional offices of UNICEF and UN-Women, we have supported both organizations in their efforts to assist other countries in the Asia-Pacific region in implementing programmes on children and women.

4. We support the work of all relevant United Nations bodies to protect the rights of children and women, such as the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

5. We advocate the inclusion of human rights, equality and a people-centred approach as guiding principles of the post-2015 development agenda.

Hearing out: a bridge builder among different views and a country with an open mind

6. We listen to the views of all countries and stakeholders on human rights issues, taking into account their national specificities, and advocate a constructive approach of dialogue and cooperation in addressing the interests and concerns of all countries as they endeavour to promote and protect human rights.

7. We are a party to seven out of nine international human rights instruments and are in the process of ratifying an eighth one. We take into high consideration the comments and recommendations of relevant treaty bodies in order to improve the human rights situation in our country.

8. We attach importance to engagement with all stakeholders, including civil society, in the improvement of human rights situations.

Helping out: a supporter of technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights

9. Since 2010, when Thailand became a member of the Council, we have introduced an annual resolution on enhancing technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights, which has been adopted by consensus and has enjoyed cross-regional co-sponsorship.

10. We support the promotion and sharing of experiences, lessons learned and good practices in the implementation of international human rights instruments, including through regional conferences and workshops that we have hosted in cooperation with United Nations regional offices.

11. We have made voluntary contributions to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to help support the implementation of its human rights programmes in various countries and to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights to promote technical cooperation and capacity-building on human rights among member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

12. We promote human rights education both at home and abroad.

Thailand's commitments and pledges on human rights

13. At the national level, Thailand pledges to:

- Complete internal processes in order to become a party to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, as well as to withdraw our interpretative declaration to article 18 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on the liberty of movement and nationality of persons with disabilities
- Take into account the recommendations received from United Nations human rights mechanisms in order to improve the human rights situation in the country, including recommendations received under the universal periodic review, the treaty bodies of the international human rights instruments to which we are a party, and the special procedures mandate holders
- Study the possibility of abolishing the death penalty
- Promote dialogue between Government agencies and civil society on the improvement of the human rights situation in the country
- Promote an inclusive society where persons with disabilities and the elderly can live in dignity and contribute meaningfully to society

- Support human rights education and training for law enforcement officers
- Promote the rights of the poor, especially their rights to health and decent work, through universal health coverage and other programmes
- Increase efforts to amend national legislation and regulations to ensure their compliance with our obligations under international human rights instruments
- Promote a society that is guided by tolerance as well as interfaith and intercultural dialogue
- Ensure access to justice for all without discrimination and continue to fight against impunity
- Promote the rule of law, good governance, transparency and anti-corruption to ensure the human rights and well-being of all people
- Develop and implement the third national human rights plan of Thailand

14. At the regional level, Thailand pledges to:

- Cooperate with neighbouring and regional countries to further promote human rights education through, among other things, the granting of scholarships
- Encourage cooperation between regional human rights mechanisms
- Cooperate with United Nations bodies and other countries on a voluntary basis to promote technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights, especially on the rights of the child, women and persons with disabilities
- Raise awareness about the principles and importance of a rights-based approach to development
- Cooperate with other countries to address transnational crime, especially human trafficking and people smuggling, taking into account the specific needs of vulnerable groups such as women and children

15. At the international level, Thailand pledges to:

- Support the work of the Council and other United Nations human rights mechanisms to improve the real situation on the ground on a non-discriminatory basis
- Promote the review of the human rights situation of all countries in a non-selective manner through the universal periodic review mechanism, especially the implementation of accepted recommendations and voluntary pledges from the first universal periodic review cycle
- Cooperate with other countries to promote and protect human rights, especially the rights of women, children and persons with disabilities, in accordance with relevant international human rights instruments
- Promote the elimination of violence against children and women in line with relevant international principles
- Foster and support international dialogue on democracy, the rule of law and good governance

- Advocate interfaith and intercultural dialogue to foster an environment of mutual understanding, tolerance, peace and respect among faiths

16. Thailand wishes to do the following to enhance the effectiveness of the Council:

- Advocate a constructive approach, emphasizing the inclusive engagement of all countries in respect of human rights, which has been the core principle of the Council since its inception
- Give equal importance to the work of the Council on civil and political rights and on economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development
- Work to find a balanced approach to promoting constructive cooperation between States and special procedures mandate holders, without infringing upon the sovereignty and independence of either side
- Strengthen the Council's role in technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights among States, and between States and relevant United Nations mechanisms
- Mainstream human rights into the post-2015 development agenda, as well as other activities of the United Nations